AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-22 (Canceled). Please cancel claims 1-22 without prejudice to the possibility of filing one or more continuing applications directed to the subject matter recited therein.

23. (New) A device for use in cardiovascular surgery on a beating heart, comprising:

a stabilizing member including at least one contact member adapted to engage a surface of the beating heart, and at least one exposure member operable in concert with said at least one contact member to reposition a portion of the surface of the beating heart, thereby providing improved exposure of a target surgical site.

24. (New) The device of claim 23, wherein said at least one contact member comprises a bottom surface shaped to engage the beating surface of the heart, and said at least one exposure member is movable toward said at least one contact member after engagement of both said at least one contact member and said at least one exposure member with the surface of the beating heart.

25. (New) The device of claim 23, wherein said at least one exposure member is biased for movement toward said at least one contact member.

26. (New) The device of claim 23, wherein said at least one contact member comprises a pair of contact members, and said at least one exposure member comprises a pair of exposure members.

27. (New) The device of claim 26, wherein said pair of contact members, together with respective ones of said pair of exposure members, are adapted to engage a surface of the beating heart on opposite sides of a target artery.

28. (New) The device of claim 23, wherein said at least one contact member comprises a spring tensioned frame, and said at least one exposure member is mounted to said spring tensioned frame and movable with respect thereto.

29. (New) The device of claim 23, wherein said at least one exposure member comprises friction means on a surface adapted to engage the surface of the heart.

30. (New) The device of claim 23, wherein said at least one exposure member comprises pins on a surface adapted to engage the surface of the heart.

31. (New) The device of claim 23, wherein said at least one contact member comprises friction means on a surface adapted to engage the surface of the heart.

32. (New) The device of claim 26, further comprising a pair of connecting shafts mounted to said pair of contact members, respectively.

33. (New) The device of claim 32, wherein said pair of connecting shafts further interconnect with shaft means, said shaft means adapted to be fixed to a stationary object.

34. (New) The device of claim 32, further comprising actuator means interconnecting said connecting shafts and adapted to move said connecting shafts and said contact members toward or away from one another.

35. (New) The device of claim 23, wherein said at least one contact member comprises a stabilizing plate and said at least one exposure member comprises an edge of said stabilizer plate, said edge deflected downwardly out of a general plane of said stabilizer plate.

36. (New) The device of claim 35, further comprising a lever member adapted to contact a bottom surface of said stabilizing plate, wherein said stabilizing plate may be rotated against said lever member to actuate said edge to apply pressure to the surface of the heart.

37. (New) The device of claim 35, further comprising a shaft means connected to said stabilizing plate, said shaft means being adapted to be fixed to a stationary object.

38. (New) The device of claim 37, wherein said shaft means is adjustable in length.

39. (New) A method of stabilizing a beating heart and exposing a surgical site comprising the steps of:

contacting a surface of the beating heart with at least one contact member;

contacting a surface of the beating heart with at least one exposure member;

moving at least one exposure member with respect to at lest one contact member to expose a surgical site.

40. (New) The method of claim 39, wherein said moving comprises moving at least one exposure member toward at least one contact member while maintaining both the exposure member and contact member in contact with the surface of the beating heart.

41. (New) The method of claim 39, wherein said moving comprises applying a downward movement and pressure against the surface of the beating heart to expose adjacent tissue.

42. (New) The method of claim 39, wherein the at least one contact member comprises a pair of contact members.

43. (New) The method of claim 42, wherein the pair of contact members are contacted to the surface of the beating heart on opposite sides of a target artery.

44. (New) The method of claim 42, wherein the at least one exposure member comprises a pair of exposure members.

45. (New) A method of stabilizing a beating heart and exposing a surgical site comprising the steps of:

contacting a surface of the beating heart with at pair of contact members;

contacting the surface of the beating heart within an area defined by the contact members, with a pair of exposure members; and

moving the exposure members with respect to the contact members, while maintaining the contact members and exposure members in contact with the surface of the beating heart, to expose a surgical site.

46. (New) A method of stabilizing a beating heart and exposing a surgical site comprising the steps of:

engaging a surface of the beating heart with at pair of contact members;

engaging the surface of the beating heart within an area defined by the contact members, with a pair of exposure members; and

moving the exposure members with respect to the contact members, while maintaining the contact members and exposure members in engagement with the surface of the beating heart, to expose a surgical site.

47. (New) A device for use in cardiovascular surgery on a beating heart, comprising:

a stabilizing member comprising a heart engaging member having a first portion adapted to engage a surface of the beating heart adjacent a target surgical site, and a second portion movably connected to said first portion, for movement relative to said first portion, and adapted to engage the surface of the beating heart and operate in concert with said first portion to reposition a portion of the surface of the beating heart, relative to said first portion, thereby providing improved exposure of the target surgical site.

48. (New) The device of claim 47, wherein said second portion is biased for movement toward said first portion.

49. (New) The device of claim 47, wherein said stabilizer comprises a pair of said heart engaging members.

50. (New) The device of claim 47, further comprising a shaft means connected to and extending away from said stabilizing member.

51. (New) The device of claim 50, wherein said shaft means comprises at least one substantially rigid elongated shaft.

52. (New) The device of claim 50, wherein said shaft means comprises at least two tubular members which telescope to adjust the length of said shaft means.

53. (New) The device of claim 50, wherein said shaft means comprises a curved tubular member.

54. (New) The device of claim 50, wherein said shaft means comprises a malleable elongated member.

55. (New) The device of claim 50, wherein said shaft means comprises an elongated member formed from a plurality of interconnecting link members.

56. (New) The device of claim 55, wherein said interconnecting link members have a first free state and a second locked state wherein adjacent link members are relatively immobile relative to each other.

57. (New) The device of claim 55, wherein said link members are interconnected by articulating joints.

58. (New) The device of claim 57, wherein said articulating joints comprise spherical joints.

59. (New) The device of claim 50, wherein said shaft means is connected to said stabilizing member by a ball and socket joint.

60. (New) The device of claim 59, wherein said ball and socket joint comprises a locking ball and socket joint.